

San Diego News

Pharmaceuticals Found In SD Drinking Water

March 10, 2008

SAN DIEGO -- At least one pharmaceutical was detected in tests of treated drinking water supplies for 24 major metropolitan areas, according to an Associated Press survey of 62 major water providers and data obtained from independent researchers.

San Diego's water tested positive for the common over-the-counter painkiller ibuprofen as well as for traces of an anti-anxiety drug and an anti-epileptic drug.

Only 28 water authorities tested drinking water. Three of those said results were negative; Dallas says tests were conducted but results are not yet available. Thirty-four locations said no testing was conducted.

Test protocols varied widely. Some researchers looked only for one pharmaceutical or two; others looked for many.

Some water systems said tests had been negative, but the AP found independent research showing otherwise. Both prescription and non-prescription drugs were detected.

Because coffee and tobacco are so widely used, researchers say their byproducts are good indicators of the presence of pharmaceuticals. Thus, they routinely test for, and often find, both caffeine and nicotine's metabolite cotinine more frequently than other drugs.

Here's the list of metropolitan areas, with the number of pharmaceuticals detected and some examples of specific drugs that were found, or where tests were negative, not conducted or awaiting results:

- Albuquerque, N.M.: tests negative
- Arlington, Texas: 1 (unspecified pharmaceutical)
- Atlanta: 3 (acetaminophen, caffeine and cotinine)
- Austin, Texas: Tests negative
- Baltimore: No testing
- Birmingham, Ala.: No testing
- Boston: No testing
- Charlotte, N.C.: No testing
- Chicago: No testing
- Cincinnati: 1 (caffeine)
- Cleveland: No testing
- Colorado Springs, Colo.: No testing
- Columbus, Ohio: 5 (azithromycin, roxithromycin, tylosin, virginiamycin and caffeine)
- Concord, Calif.: 2 (meprobamate and sulfamethoxazole)
- Dallas: Results pending
- Denver: Unspecified antibiotics
- Detroit: Unspecified drugs
- El Paso, Texas: No testing
- Fairfax, Va.: No testing
- Fort Worth, Texas: No testing
- Fresno, Calif.: No testing
- Honolulu: No testing

- Houston: No testing
- Indianapolis: 1 (caffeine)
- Jacksonville, Fla.: No testing
- Kansas City, Mo.: No testing
- Las Vegas: 3 (carbamazepine, meprobamate and phenytoin)
- Long Beach, Calif.: 2 (meprobamate and phenytoin)
- Los Angeles: 2 (meprobamate and phenytoin)
- Louisville, Ky.: 3 (caffeine, carbamazepine and phenytoin)
- Memphis, Tenn.: No testing
- Mesa, Ariz.: No testing
- Miami: No testing
- Milwaukee: 1 (cotinine)
- Minneapolis: 1 (caffeine)
- Nashville, Tenn.: No testing
- New Orleans: 3 (clofibrac acid, estrone and naproxen)
- New York City: No testing
- Northern New Jersey: 7 (caffeine, carbamazepine, codeine, cotinine, dehydronifedipine, diphenhydramine and sulfathiazole)
- Oakland, Calif.: No testing
- Oklahoma City: No testing
- Omaha, Neb.: No testing
- Orlando, Fla.: No testing
- Philadelphia: 56 (including amoxicillin, azithromycin, carbamazepine, diclofenac, prednisone and tetracycline)
- Phoenix: No testing
- Portland, Ore.: 4 (acetaminophen, caffeine, ibuprofen and sulfamethoxazole)
- Prince George's and Montgomery counties, Md.: No testing
- Riverside County, Calif.: 2 (meprobamate and phenytoin)
- Sacramento, Calif.: No testing
- San Antonio: No testing
- **San Diego**: 3 (ibuprofen, meprobamate and phenytoin)
- San Francisco: 1 (estradiol)
- San Jose, Calif.: No testing
- Santa Clara, Calif.: No testing
- Seattle: No testing
- Southern California: 2 (meprobamate and phenytoin)
- Suffolk County, N.Y.: No testing
- Tucson, Ariz.: 3 (carbamazepine, dehydronifedipine and sulfamethoxazole)
- Tulsa, Okla.: No testing
- Virginia Beach, Va.: Tests negative
- Washington, D.C.: 6 (carbamazepine, caffeine, ibuprofen, monensin, naproxen and sulfamethoxazole)
- Wichita, Kan.: No testing

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